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IT'S BEGINNING TO SOUND A LOT LIKE CHRISTMAS

LeAnn Rimes sat down with Metro to discuss her 'You and Me and Christmas' holiday tour. 16

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8 THINGS TO KNOW

World leaders pose at the U.N. climate change conference (COP25) in Madrid. December 2, 2019. REUTERS

Don't fiddle while the planet burns, U.N. chief warns climate summit

Are we nearing the point of no return?

The world must choose hope over surrender in the fight against climate change, U.N. secretary-general Antonio Guterres said on Monday, warning at a summit in Madrid that governments risked sleepwalking past a point of no return.

The latest round of annual negotiations to bolster the 2015 Paris Agreement to curb global warming began against a backdrop of unusually severe weather disasters this year, from fires in the Arctic, Amazon and Australia to intense tropical hurricanes.

"Do we really want to be remembered as the generation that buried its head in the sand, that fiddled while the planet burned?" Guterres told the opening session of the two-week gathering, held in a hangar-like conference center in the Spanish capital.

"One is the path of surrender, where we have sleepwalked past the point of no return," he said. "The other option is the path of hope. A path of resolve, of sustainable solutions."

Delegates aim to tackle an important outstanding issue from the Paris accord: rules on carbon trading that are seen as vital to kick-starting faster action to reduce emissions.

But the summit is also being watched as a broader test of international commitment to the kind of major changes in energy, transport and industry that scientists say are needed to wean the world off fossil fuels fast enough to avoid catastrophe.

> **"No one can independently pull out of this challenge. There is no wall high enough to protect any country from this challenge, however powerful they are."**
>
> Sanchez

Mark Montegriffo, a journalism student, had traveled from London to join several dozen protesters with the Extinction Rebellion movement who gathered outside the venue to demand bolder action by the officials cloistered inside.

"It would take a radical transformation, but it starts on the streets, it starts here," the 22-year-old said.

The Paris process faces a moment of truth next year when governments are due to unveil more ambitious proposals to cut the production of planet-warming gases in time to stop the climate careering past dangerous tipping points.

Under existing pledges, the world is on course for the kind of temperature rises that could threaten the stability of industrial societies and lay waste to swathes of the developing world in the second half of the century, scientists say.

While a fast-growing youth-led climate activist movement is pressuring leaders to act, U.S. President Donald Trump's decision to begin withdrawing from the accord last month has cast a shadow over the latest round of negotiations.

Nevertheless, U.S. House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi, who is leading impeachment proceedings against Trump in Washington, appeared at the talks on Monday with assurances that Congress was committed to ambitious climate action.

"By coming here we want to say to everyone we are still in, the United States is still in," Pelosi told reporters at the talks, flanked by Democratic Congressional representatives.

Spain's acting Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez, whose government stepped in to host the summit after unrest erupted in Chile, the original venue, urged delegates to take ambitious action to preserve the "fragile balance" of life on Earth.

"No one can independently pull out of this challenge," Sanchez told delegates. "There is no wall high enough to protect any country from this challenge, however powerful they are." REUTERS

National encyclopedia born as Putin pans Wikipedia

2 Russia is to set up a new online site for its national encyclopedia after President Vladimir Putin said Wikipedia was unreliable and should be replaced. The move will ensure people can find "reliable information that is constantly updated on the basis of scientifically verified sources of knowledge," a government resolution said. Putin last month proposed replacing the crowd-sourced online encyclopedia Wikipedia with an electronic version of the Great Russian Encyclopaedia – the successor to the Soviet Union's main encyclopedia. "This, at any rate, would be reliable information offered in a modern form," Putin said. REUTERS

Trump grants temp reprieve for N.Irish ex-militant

3 The Trump administration has granted a rare reprieve from deportation to a former member of an Irish Republican militant group who had been convicted of crimes committed during the political and sectarian conflict in Northern Ireland in the 1980s, a U.S. official said on Monday. Democratic and Republican lawmakers from New York had lobbied for Malachy McAllister to be allowed to stay in the United States despite a 2017 immigration policy change that raised the legal bar for temporary relief for deportation. He had been due to be deported last week. McAllister was convicted in Northern Ireland of charges related to serving as a lookout in a 1981 attack on a police officer in Northern Ireland, according to U.S. court documents. He also was convicted of plotting to shoot and kill another officer. He was jailed for seven years but freed on early release in 1985. REUTERS

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Center for Emotional Fitness – Cherry Hill, NJ

A girl holds a poster reading "no more!" as she takes part in a rally of moms against gun violence and calling for Federal Background Checks on August 18, 2019 in New York City. JOHANNES EISELE/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

106 people under age 18 have been shot in Philly this year

One in every 12 shooting victims in Philly is under age 18.

BECCA GLASSER-BAKER
Rebecca.Glasser@metro.us

The gun violence epidemic is hitting Philly hard this year.

Inqurier.com reports that 106 people under age 18 have been shot this year, and there's still a month to go. It was reported that a child is shot in Philly every 3.7 days. To put that in perspective, almost twice a week, a young person is shot.

It was reported that last year, one in every 12 shooting victims was a child under age 18.

The most recent death dominating the headlines was that of girl who was shot as she exited a bus while traveling home over the weekend. Although the teen has not been named at this time, outlets are reporting that the victim was between 12 and 14.

This recent incident took place on Saturday at around 4:40 p.m., and it was reported that the victim was taken to Temple University Hospital and pronounced dead.

Officials have a 41-year-old male suspect in custody. They recovered the weapon. Inqurier.com reports that the suspect was arrested on the scene. He was charged with murder, three counts of attempted murder, illegal possession of a gun, reckless endangerment and other related charges.

Victoria Wylie, a South Philadelphia organizer whose brother was killed 11 years ago, told Inqurier.com that, "It's upsetting that teenagers can't be teenagers anymore. Things that were once just part of coming up and growing up, like going downtown to go shopping, you have to be afraid. It angers me."

Wylie added, "Here you have a teenager who's doing what's normal at her age, 16 years old, and getting off the bus, and I would say doing nothing wrong, and she's a victim of gun violence."

The shootings have occurred at numerous hours and times of the day. They have also occurred in different locations, and residents feel powerless because no matter what a teen does, they are threatened by this unpredictable violence.

Felicia Pendleton, a mother from North Philadelphia whose son was killed in 2016 while home from college for spring break told Inqurier.com that, "You can do everything that you're supposed to do, and it still doesn't make you exempt."

There are numerous examples of how something as simple as getting off a bus or walking home from school can result in a gun violence-related death – last month, a 10-year-old boy named Sameje O'Branty was shot while walking home from school.

Prior to that, 2-year-old Nikolette Rivera was shot in her mother's arms while at home.

While sitting in a car, 11-month-old Yazeem Jenkins was shot.

Last week, a 16-year-old boy was shot, as was a 9-year-old – on the same day. The incidents were separate cases.

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REUTERS

Amazon pulls Auschwitz Christmas decorations from site

Sellers violated Amazon's guidelines for permitted sales.

Amazon has withdrawn from sale products decorated with images of the former Auschwitz concentration camp in Poland including Christmas decorations after a complaint from the organization that preserves the site as a memorial.

The Auschwitz museum drew attention to the products on its Twitter account on Sunday, calling them "disturbing and disrespectful," and asked Amazon to remove them. On Monday, Amazon said it had done so.

"All sellers must follow our selling guidelines and those who do not will be subject to action, including potential removal of their account," an Amazon spokesman said.

Amazon's guidelines for sellers include the following line: "Amazon does not allow products that promote, incite or glorify hatred, violence, racial, sexual or religious intolerance or promote organizations with such views."

The guidelines also state: "We'll also remove listings that graphically portray violence or victims of violence."

Between 1940 and 1945, about 1.5 million people, mainly Jews, were killed by the Nazis at the Auschwitz-Birkenau camp in German-occupied Poland.

The Auschwitz museum said the products in question were still available on e-commerce marketplace Wish and called for their removal there too.

A Wish spokesperson said: "These items are completely inappropriate and should not have been listed by sellers on our platform. We are removing them as a matter of urgency."

The products include ceramic ornaments, computer mouse pads and bottle tops decorated with images of the camp, made by a company which produces a wide range of souvenirs like fridge magnets and mugs featuring images of tourist destinations.

Reuters was not immediately able to contact the maker of the decorations.

"We consider this rather an isolated incident," Pawel Sawicki, press officer for the Auschwitz Memorial, told Reuters by email. "What seems to be an issue is that more and more producers use some image-grabbing software and place hundreds of images on their products hoping to find customers."

REUTERS

"These items are completely inappropriate and should not have been listed by sellers on our platform. We are removing them as a matter of urgency."

A Wish spokesperson

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GETTY IMAGES

Everything you need to know about 2019 holiday shipping deadlines

From USPS to UPS and more, here's what you need to know.

BECCA GLASSER-BAKER
Rebecca.Glasser@metro.us

The holiday season is just around the corner!

During the holiday season, it's easy to get carried away with sending out gifts or ordering online. Most online retailers will specify if items will arrive on time for the holidays. To make sure your gift arrives on time, we're here to help.

If you are sending a gift to a loved one across the world or states, and want to make sure it arrives before Christmas, here's what you need to know. We have rounded up a few common shipping services deadlines to help you get into the holiday spirit.

2019 Holiday Shipping Deadlines:

2019 Holiday Shipping Deadlines for Fed-Ex:
Dec. 9: FedEx SmartPost
Dec. 16: FedEx Ground and Home Delivery
Dec. 19: FedEx Express Saver
Dec. 20: FedEx 2Day and FedEx 2Day a.m.
Dec. 23: FedEx Standard Overnight, FedEx Priority

Overnight and FedEx First Overnight from one U.S. location to another
Dec. 25: FedEx SameDay, FedEx SameDay City Direct, FedEx SameDay City Priority
For the international holiday shipping deadlines for FedEx, go to fedex.com.

2019 Holiday Shipping Deadlines for UPS:
Dec. 13: UPS Ground
Dec. 19: UPS 3-Day Select
Dec. 20: UPS 2nd Day Air
Dec. 22: UPS Express Critical
Dec. 23: UPS Next Day Air
For more information about the 2019 Holiday Shipping Dates for UPS, go to ups.com.

2019 Holiday Shipping Deadlines for USPS:
Dec. 14: USPS Retail Ground
Dec. 18: Alaska to mainland First-Class Mail
Dec. 19: Hawaii to mainland First-Class Mail and Priority Mail
Dec. 19: Alaska to mainland Priority Mail
Dec. 20: First Class Mail service
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Twitter makes global changes to comply with privacy laws

REUTERS

Changes will take effect Jan. 1, 2020.

Twitter Inc is updating its global privacy policy to give users more information about what data advertisers might receive and is launching a site to provide clarity on its data protection efforts, the company said on Monday.

The changes, which will take effect on Jan. 1, 2020, will comply with the California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA).

The California law requires large businesses to give consumers more transparency and control over their personal information, such as allowing them to request that their data be deleted and to opt out of having their data sold to third parties.

Social media companies including Facebook Inc and Alphabet Inc's Google have come under scrutiny on data privacy issues, fueled by Facebook's Cambridge Analytica scandal in which personal data were harvested from millions of users without their consent.

Twitter also announced on Monday that it is moving the accounts of users outside of the United States and European Union which were previously contracted by Twitter International Company in Dublin, Ireland, to the San Francisco-based Twitter Inc.

The company said this move would allow it the flexibility to test different settings and controls with these users, such as additional opt-in or opt-out privacy preferences, that would likely be restricted by the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Europe's landmark digital privacy law.

"We want to be able to experiment without immediately running afoul of the GDPR provisions," Twitter's data protection officer Damien Kieran told Reuters in a phone interview.

"The goal is to learn from those experiments and then to provide those same experiences to people all around the world," he said.

The company, which said it has upped its communications about data and security-related disclosures over the last two years, emphasized in a Monday blog post that it was working to upgrade systems and build privacy into new products.

In October, Twitter announced it had found that phone numbers and email addresses used for two-factor authentication may inadvertently have been used for advertising purposes.

Twitter's new privacy site, dubbed the 'Twitter Privacy Center' is part of the company's efforts to showcase its work on data protection and will also give users another route to access and download their data.

Twitter joins other internet companies who have recently staked out their positions ahead of CCPA coming into effect. Last month, Microsoft Corp said it would honor the law throughout the United States and Google told clients that it would let sites and apps using its advertising tools block personalized ads as part of its efforts to comply with CCPA. REUTERS

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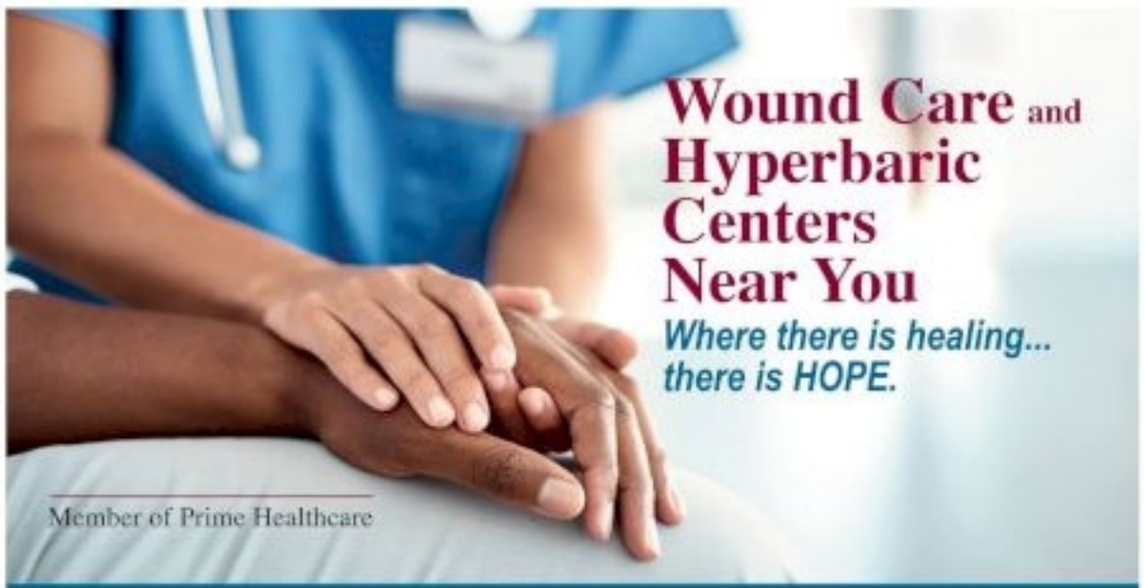

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Am I normal (sexually speaking)?

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Whether you're partnered or single, investing in your mental health doesn't have to be a solo journey. No one knows this better than the Philadelphia Institute for Individual, Relational & Sex Therapy (PhIIRST). At the end of the day, it's all about braving life's challenges so that you can be your best self.

Many of us fear that our sexual thoughts, feelings and behaviors aren't "normal"—whatever that means. In reality, human sexuality is a deeply complex thing that really can't be put in a box. Metro spent time with Chris Fariello, Ph.D., MA, LMFT, PhIIRST's founder and director, to talk about why we're so hung up on being sexually "normal."

How common is it that people are wondering if they're "normal?"

This is one of the questions I get the most. The truth is that there really is a wide range of what's considered "normal." In fact, a better question might be: "Is this normal for me?" Because sex is discussed with such reservation, most people do not get to hear about what the true sexual behavior and interests of others really are.

What are the more common concerns around normalcy?

Clients are concerned about many aspects of sexual expression, including penis size, erectile functioning, how they experience sexual desire, their sexual interests, and the ways in which they express their sexuality (i.e. sexual behaviors). Most people truly believe that they are very unique and somehow "broken" and needing to be "fixed."

Why might people fear that they aren't normal?

We all want to feel liked and accepted. This is even more true when it comes to sexual expression. Because sexuality is loaded with so much negative connotation, it's easy to fear that we will be shunned or rejected if our sexuality is seen as somehow different.

How can therapy be helpful for fears of being abnormal?

Sex therapists can offer a greater understanding of "what is normal" for those who struggle with fears that they are somehow different. Clients are often very relieved to find out that what they

are experiencing is actually quite typical, or at the very least, not pathological. They can then learn to accept, appreciate, and explore new ways to express their sexuality.

What's "normal," sexually speaking, covers a very wide spectrum. Rest easy knowing that your feelings probably aren't as out there as you may think. The experienced, licensed therapists at PhIIRST are specifically trained to help people explore these feelings in a safe, nonjudgmental environment.

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UK Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn. REUTERS

Leak of papers before UK election raises 'specter of foreign influence': experts

Russian interference has been alleged, especially by the Labour Party.

The leak and distribution of classified British-U.S. trade documents online resembles a disinformation campaign uncovered this year that originated in Russia, according to experts who say it could signal foreign interference in Britain's election.

The opposition Labour Party said on Nov. 27 the classified documents, which first appeared online on Oct. 21, showed the ruling Conservatives were plotting to offer up the state-run National Health Service for sale in trade talks with Washington.

The NHS is much loved by Britons and has become an important issue in the Dec. 12 election, in which Labour trails the Conservatives despite cutting its lead in some opinion polls.

Researchers at Britain's Oxford and Cardiff universities, the Atlantic Council thinktank and social media analytics firm Graphika said the way the documents were first shared online mirrored a campaign called Secondary Infektion.

Secondary Infektion, uncovered by the Atlantic Council in June, used fabricated or altered documents to try to spread false narratives across at least 30 online platforms, and stemmed from a network of social media accounts which Facebook said "originated in Russia."

"It's on the same set of websites (as Secondary Infektion), it's using the same types of accounts and making the same language errors. It's either the Russian operation or someone trying hard to look like it," said Ben Nimmo, head of investigations at Graphika.

> **"We know from the Russian playbook that often it is not for or against anything. It's about sowing confusion, and destroying the field of political trust."**
>
> Lisa-Maria Neudert, researcher

Reuters has been unable to verify whether the documents are genuine. Labour and the British government declined immediate comment. In Washington, the U.S. Trade Representative did not respond to requests for comment.

It is not clear who was behind either operation and cyber experts say it is hard to attribute malicious actions online with certainty.

Moscow has denied allegations of election meddling and the Kremlin did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

"Whoever did this ... was absolutely trying to keep it a secret," said Graham Brookie, director of the Atlantic Council's Digital Forensic Research Lab. "It carries the specter of foreign influence."

A link to download documents with the same content and metadata as the documents released by Labour was first shared on Internet discussion site Reddit by a user who made language errors typical of non-native English speakers.

A person with the same username and profile picture copied the Reddit post to a website known for hosting conspiracy theories, and a Twitter account with the same name and profile picture then tweeted the link to journalists and politicians.

Reuters has been unable to establish how the Reddit user or Labour acquired the unredacted documents. REUTERS

the Grumble

sudoku

EASY

4			7				3	
	7	9				5		
	6	2	3					4
7	4			8			9	5
		6	1		5	2		
5	2			3			4	1
2					1	4	8	
		4				1	5	
	8				4			6

MEDIUM

		9	8		1	3		6
	5		3					4
1	7			9				
					4	6		3
8								1
7		5	1					
				4			1	7
5					3		6	
9		4	7		2	5		

HARD

	8				4		2	6
		1				8		
6				7	8			3
			7	6			5	
				3				
	5			9	2			
3			1	4				2
		6				9		
5	1		6				3	

READER WRITE-INS:

MOVIE PRICES

The went to the movies recently and could not believe that a single ticket was close to $15. Where did they get that number? With prices like that I will take my time from now on and wait for movies to hit Netflix. No thanks.

Phil, *Metro Philly reader*

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INVITE THE WORLD TO YOUR EVENTS

List your event on metro.us/events

metro.us/horoscopes

Aries Don't be surprised by what others decide to do. Do not feel that you must follow the crowd or get involved in something that doesn't interest you.

Taurus If you take pride in what you do, you'll make a good impression. Someone special will grant you a wish or offer you something unexpected.

Gemini A change someone makes will make you think twice. Don't be too quick to respond to this alteration. Gather the facts before you make your position clear.

Cancer Do something that makes you happy. Working on a creative project or attending an event that interests you will help you make an important decision. A relationship will take a positive turn

Leo An impulsive purchase will leave you short of cash. Try altering your living space to accommodate your budget. Less worry will help improve your health.

Virgo Ask and you shall receive. If you are diplomatic and discreet, you will get your way. Being attentive will enhance your life and a meaningful relationship.

Libra Follow a path that will lead to a better lifestyle. Proper diet, exercise and rest are encouraged. Stop worrying about what you cannot change, and make the most of what you've got.

Scorpio Let your imagination lead the way. You'll be in a high creative cycle, and you should focus on whatever brings you the most joy. Share your dream with a loved one.

Sagittarius Keep your ideas secret. Pay less attention to criticism and more to taking care of your responsibilities. Emotional pressure is best ignored, and personal growth should be your focus.

Capricorn Ask someone you have helped in the past to reciprocate. Taking a proactive approach to making your voice heard and having your wishes granted will raise your profile and reputation.

Aquarius Offer creative input. A chance to try something new will give you a different perspective when an opportunity comes along. Choose a path that challenges you to do your best.

Pisces Your intuition will not lead you astray. Make changes based on how you feel and what you want. Discuss your plans with a loved one. EUGENIA LAST

WIDE EYED STUDIOS

Cold as ice

The Snow Queen herself gives Metro the scoop on the Arden's latest production.

MOLLY GIVEN
Molly.Given@metro.us

The wintertime is loved by some and dreaded by others, but what this interesting season always brings is time to reflect and a chance to connect with others, and those themes are abundantly explored in the Arden Theatre Company's latest production, "The Snow Queen." If the classic story of a protagonist traveling through the seasons to rescue her friend from the cold clutches of the icy queen sounds familiar, you may have heard the fairytale by Hans Christian Andersen or seen the popular Disney remake "Frozen" – but the story taking place on stage at the Arden is more mystical than ever. Katherine Fried, the Snow Queen herself, sat down with Metro to discuss the show, the magical themes the story encompasses and the hauntingly beautiful music that helps set the snowy scene.

What motivated you to want to play the Snow Queen? What do you like about her?

I was enticed by the strength of her character. I think that I'm always drawn into playing more vicious and powerful people, and this was a wonderful opportunity to do that. I was also told that there was going to be a good amount of music in the show and that was a draw for me as well. She's an interesting and unique character because you're sort of playing a season and the characteristics of a season, but at the same time, you get to create a back story for why she is the way she is.

How would you describe the story?

Essentially it is about the deep love in connection with one another and about how conversation surrounding the four seasons can really highlight the beauty of human connection. With wintertime, I think we're dealing with a lot of hardening and grief, then vulnerability gets to ripen and progress through springtime, then become open and bold in summer, and then we circle back to loss in the fall. But basically, what we're seeing on stage is the protagonist, Gerta, searching for her friend who has been taken away from her by winter, and we watch her progress through all of the different seasons until she makes it to the wintertime to find him and they are able to reconnect through her journey. But both of them have lost parents and are sitting with grief in their own ways, the beautiful challenges and lessons of time under these external conditions allow them to find the strength in their hearts to come back to one another. We get to do that through a mystical world and a mystical telling, and there's a lot of whimsy involved. But I think the heart of the story has a lot to do with reaching one another through the strength of vulnerability. We also get to talk about themes of pride, vanity, insecurity and where those faults stem from, and that's usually a place of pain and needing to protect yourself. So we go through this journey in order to better understand how we cannot only be free with one another, but also how we can better protect each other.

Does the music in the show follow along the same mystical and magical lines of the storyline?

I do think the music does. The script gives us a nice skeleton that we get to fill in with muscle and bone and blood – one of the ways that we do that is by taking some sparse poetic lines and musicalizing them. Our music director has given us some themes that we have been able to run rampant with, which are pretty based in Celtic musicianship and older Northern music. We have a cellist, violinist, accordion, symbol and a couple of guitar players, and you're also going to hear a lot of interesting vocal decor throughout the show. It has a bit of a haunting tone but there is also musical humor. I would say the music to me sounds like it's coming from a far off origin. If you look at different musical histories, there are a lot of similar roots that come back to the Middle East, and if you look at Middle East music in comparison to Nordic music, you'll have a lot of the same flavors in both musical themes. So it's a very rooted sound.

Any particular song or scene from the show that you're most excited for people to see?

There are going to be some really interesting design elements at play. The ending is going to be really brilliant – there's sort of a showdown between the Snow Queen and Gerta the protagonist – it's got this element of cold meets the heat, and heart meets the hurt quality. But my favorite season to watch right now is Summer. I think it's jubilant and comical and just very otherworldly in an exciting way.

Why do you think this show is ideal this time of year?

I think that this time of year is a really nice time to sit and reflect on the importance and beauty of community. This show has a central theme of that focus and that value and it's a good time of year for that focus because the weather extremes bring the gift of bringing people together. You're spending time with the arts and indoors and I tend to find people to be more neighborly during this time as well. I just think this show explores the value of relationships and deep care for one another.

Catch "The Snow Queen" onstage at the Arden Theatre Company until Jan. 26

Sippin through a winter wonderland

"Philly the Snowman" is now available at the Loews Hotel PROVIDED

Loews Hotel is offering a variety of holiday-themed fun for the 2019 season.

MOLLY GIVEN
Molly.Given@metro.us

In the ice-cold weather, a piping hot cup of delectably soothing hot chocolate is just what the doctor ordered. At the Loews Hotel in Center City Philadelphia, guests will get to indulge in the seasonal favorite treat in a deliciously unique way this year with its new Holiday Cocoa and Cocktails promotion featuring a variety of libations for both kids and adults.

A warm hot cocoa or cocktail is the perfect way to end a day of holiday shopping and sightseeing," said Frederic Najem, Director of Food & Beverage in a release. "Being on 12th and Market, we are in the heart of some of the best seasonal activities for couples and families this season like ice skating at Dilworth Park and Christmas Village in LOVE Park, and now a festive drink at Bank & Bourbon should be added to everyone's list."

Just one delightful cocktail from Loews, "Philly the Snowman," incorporates sweet coco powder and steamed milk, Ancho Reyes chili liquor and New Liberty Bloody Butcher Bourbon (which is distilled in Philadelphia.) The drink will be served hot and topped with whipped cream and shaved Hershey's Special Dark. The kid's version incorporates all of the delicious flavors listed above minus the more spirited ingredient. "Philly the Snowman" is now available at Bank & Bourbon and the Lounge at the Lobby Bar for $12 until New Year's Day. According to the release, as a bonus, the kid-friendly cocoa will also be offered complimentary with the purchase of a "spiked" cocoa for adults. Philadelphians can also indulge in the tasty treat at the Hotel's Holiday Pop Up Bar located on the 33rd floor opening Dec. 16-20. The pop-up bar will be open from 4:30 pm-7:30 pm during that five day period.

In addition to all of the holiday happenings at the esteemed Hotel, Loews is taking the jolly season up another notch with a winter wonderland experience taking over their Millennium Ballroom on Dec. 15. From 10 am-2 pm, guests can bring the whole family to experience plenty of upbeat and seasonal activities. The day will include photos with Santa himself, the abominable snowman and a giant snowglobe; family crafts; a holiday bouncy castle, mazes and more inflatables, a Fun Express Train Station and much more. Brunch will also be included and will feature a children's pancake making station, carving stations and homemade pies and desserts from Pastry Chef Amanda Kaewvichien. There will also be plenty of delicious holiday cocktails for adults to sip on. Tickets ($49 for adults, $24 for children) are available now through Eventbrite.

So this holiday season, be sure to head to the Loews Hotel to indulge, enjoy and truly be a part of the most wonderful time of the year in the City of Brotherly Love.

For more information on all of the holiday happenings at the Loews Hotel visit loewshotels.com

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It's beginning to sound a lot like Christmas

LeAnn Rimes sat down with Metro to discuss her "You and Me and Christmas" holiday tour and more.

MOLLY GIVEN
Molly.Given@metro.us

There may not be anyone who loves Christmas as much as country music superstar turned actress and author LeAnn Rimes. The 37-year-old songstress has spent a decent chunk of her career singing about, starring in and writing for the jolly time of year – and with three full Christmas albums, a plethora of holiday Hallmark films and her seventh tour surrounding the festive occasion, it's fair to say audiences also enjoy hearing Rimes' take on the lively season. Rimes sat down with Metro to discuss her love of the holidays, her songwriting inspirations and dive into more on her illustrious career and annual Christmas tour.

Catch LeAnn Rimes at Parx Casino this Thursday SARAH HERTEL

On top of many incredible albums and hit songs, you have also released three Christmas albums to date and three original songs for your Hallmark Christmas film "It's Christmas, Eve." What do you enjoy the most about writing/performing holiday songs specifically?
Writing songs for "Its Christmas, Eve" was so much fun. To have the challenge of not only writing original Christmas songs but having to write for each scene with its own specific need to meet for each character was exhilarating as a songwriter.

Do you feel any difference going on tour during the holiday season compared to the rest of the year?
I do because it's my favorite time of the year! And who doesn't love singing Christmas songs? But honestly, there is something different in the air over the holidays... I think it's a time when people put aside their differences and come together and celebrate.

"You and Me and Christmas" is your seventh Christmas tour, anything new or special about this go around?
We make every tour a little different from before. With this tour, the song selections are coming from what I want the audience to feel. [The] kind of ride I want to take the audience on is a setting that will be intimate. I like to try to help the audience get to know me better, so they feel like they know me better than they did when they walked through the doors, so they will see a glimpse into my heart and I hope it makes their season a little brighter.

Switching gears to your songwriting – what inspirations do you have for not only penning Christmas music but any song in your catalog?
Gosh life is the inspiration. Experiences, love, people, and what is happening in the world today inspires me to write.

On top of singing and songwriting, you also act. Do you feel like acting lets you exercise different creative muscles? What do you like the most about it?
Yes definitely, it allows me to embrace a different side of me. I like that I get transported to another place and become a character.

You're about to embark on tour, but what does the future hold for you? Any upcoming albums, movies or singles in the midst?
Yes to all the above! I can't share too much right now, but we have a fun 2020 planned so you have to stay tuned.
Catch LeAnn Rimes at Parx Casino on Dec. 5 at 8 pm

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Ramon Ortega A106 — Chantay Ervin L147
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Tyhierra Jett F522 — Dianna Johnson P034
Freddy Martinez H532 — Ruben Otero P412
Pedro Naranjo G600 — Catherine Crowner R617
Miriam Rodriguez G606 — Malikia Craddis R645
Ava Charles G615 — Zenaida Garcia S157
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MATT BURKE

Matt Burke is a veteran sports journalist and the Founder and Editor in Chief of MetroBet.

It's the most wonderful time of year for betting on sports with pro and college football still in full swing and with the NBA and NHL just getting underway. This past weekend, a New Jersey bettor won huge while betting the NFL through DraftKings as his bet on the Texans +4 against the Patriots cashed for a whopping $452,000.

Right now if you use the MetroBet affiliate link for DraftKings Sportsbook in PA or NJ you can get a risk free bet for $200 and a deposit bonus up to $500. All you have to do is go to: **tinyurl.com/yxn7h73s**

By virtue of the Ravens eking out a win over the 49ers, and with the Patriots falling to the Texans – Baltimore is now the favorite to win Super Bowl LIV at most sportsbooks. Here are the latest Super Bowl odds at **tinyurl.com/yxn7h73s**

Ravens +250
Patriots +400
Saints +500
49ers +750
Chiefs +1100
Seahawks +1100
Packers +1600
Vikings +2000
Cowboys +2500
Texans +2500
Bills +4000
Eagles +6000

Now is a great time to value bet on Super Bowl futures as recent NFL history suggests that what is true in early December is rarely true in early February.

Consider that the Patriots lost back-to-back games last December and the odds looked like this heading into the 2018 postseason:

Saints +250
Rams +400
Chiefs +470
Patriots +650
Bears +700

And two years ago after a shaky December, Nick Foles and the Eagles had 60-1 odds to win it all heading into the playoffs.

Good futures plays here are the Patriots at +400 (they always figure it out in January), the 49ers at +750 (they were right in that game at Baltimore and could still get a first round bye), and the Titans as a longshot at +6600.

We've loved Tennessee's potential all year (they were our preseason sleeper pick) and they're finally rolling now that they have a competent quarterback. Ryan Tannehill and company have ripped off three wins in a row and they control their own destiny in the AFC South with two games against the Texans this month.

ALL GETTY IMAGES

TWEET OF THE DAY

Ben Fawkes
@BFawkesESPN

The Cleveland Browns were the favorites at +135 odds to win the AFC North before Week 1 at Caesars Sportsbook. They were officially eliminated from winning the division Sunday.

Best bets

College FB betting: SEC title game

Joe Burrow and the LSU Tigers (12-0) should keep their undefeated season intact as they meet Jake Fromm and the Georgia Bulldogs (11-1) at Mercedes-Benz Stadium on Saturday afternoon.

LSU's dynamic offense gets what appears to be their toughest assignment of the campaign as they face Georgia's third-ranked defense by yards allowed per play. But Burrow (78.3 percent completion rate, 10.9 yards per attempt, 44-6 TD-INT ratio) and company seem equal to the task as their offense is rated second in the corresponding category.

Bettors should be wary of Tigers wide-out Ja'Marr Chase, who has triple-digit reception yards in five straight contests (eight TDs in that span), stamping him as a Biletnikoff Award semifinalist.

Meanwhile, the Bulldogs' modest offense has managed an average of just 21.5 points over their last six conference games. The Tigers' defense is nowhere near as stingy as Georgia's, 28th by yards allowed per play, but Fromm (62 percent completion rate, 7.6 yards per attempt, 21-3 TD-INT ratio) is playing checkers while Burrow is playing chess. Lay the points with LSU on Saturday.

The play: LSU -7

ROBERT CRISCOLA

VSiN DAILY LINE

NFL WEEK 14

NEW YORK GIANTS AT PHILADELPHIA EAGLES -8

DALLAS COWBOYS -3 AT CHICAGO BEARS

BALTIMORE RAVENS -5 AT BUFFALO BILLS

MIAMI DOLPHINS AT NEW YORK JETS -6

SAN FRAN 49ERS AT NEW ORLEANS SAINTS -3

KANSAS CITY CHIEFS AT NE PATRIOTS -3

SEATTLE SEAHAWKS -2.5 AT LA RAMS

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Resolute Flyers host Leafs tonight

Philly looks to keep their win streak intact at the Wells Fargo Center.

JOE PANTORNO
joseph.pantorno@metro.us

Matt Niskanen has led the defensive rebirth of the Flyers. GETTY IMAGES

While other Metropolitan Division teams like the New York Islanders and Washington Capitals were making plenty of noise, the Flyers put together quite an impressive November of their own.

Picking up points in 14 of 16 games (10-2-4) — including a current four-game win streak — Philadelphia put together its best November in franchise history. It sparked a season that began slowly after a less-than-impressive 5-5-1 start to life under Alain Vigneault.

The Flyers have also jumped up in the standings from sixth on Oct. 31 to third in the Metropolitan Division entering tonight's matchup against the Toronto Maple Leafs (7 p.m. ET, NBCSPA).

As general manager, Chuck Fletcher prepares to celebrate a year at the helm, his move to bolster the blue line by acquiring Matt Niskanen from the Capitals has played a huge role in the Flyers' November turnaround.

In those 16 games last month, Philadelphia allowed three or fewer goals in 12 of those games.

They are now tied for the fourth-fewest goals allowed by an Eastern Conference team this season with 78 through 27 games. That's a considerable leap for a team that gave up the second-most last year.

As it stands, the Flyers are poised to shave nearly 50 goals off their defense in 2019-20. Their current 82-game pace of 236 goals allowed is 45 better than last year's dizzying mark of 281.

The Flyers' penalty kill has also seen a vast improvement with an 85.71 percent success rate — good for third in the NHL — compared to a 78.48 percent mark that ranked 26th in the league last season.

The improved defense will have a stiff test tonight when they host the Maple Leafs.

Toronto's loaded offense that features the likes of Auston Matthews, John Tavares and Mitch Marner ranks fourth in the NHL with 93 goals in 28 games this season.

After a difficult stretch that resulted in the firing of head coach Mike Babcock, the Maple Leafs have won four of their last five games under interim bench boss Sheldon Keefe.

They've averaged a healthy four goals per game during that stretch.

Something has to give.

TORONTO MAPLE LEAFS
LEAFS AT FLYERS
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NBC SPORTS PHILLY

Phillies keeping Knapp, avoid arbitration

Amongst several moves on Monday, the Phillies and catcher Andrew Knapp avoided arbitration when the two parties agreed on a one-year, $710,000 deal.

Major League Baseball's deadline for teams to inform arbitration-eligible players whether or not they'll be issued a contract for the following season was Monday at 8 p.m. ET.

Knapp, 28, is coming off another unimpressive season as the Phillies' backup catcher.

In 74 appearances he slashed .213/.318/.324 with two home runs and 8 RBIs, providing little behind All-Star JT Realmuto.

Now in 214 career games, the 28-year old has a career slash line of .223/.327/.336 with nine home runs and 36 RBIs.

That's not exactly a bonafide backstop option on the depth chart.

The move could be used as insurance considering the Phillies have been on the market looking for other catchers.

Over the weekend, the team was linked with free agent catcher Austin Romine, who has spent parts of eight seasons with the New York Yankees.

GETTY IMAGES

The 31-year old put together a career year, which kept up with the Yankees' 2019 theme of "next man up" after their roster was decimated by injuries.

The light-hitting catcher put up a career-best .281 batting average with eight home runs and 35 RBIs in 72 games.

That's a considerable upgrade compared to what Knapp can provide and would allow the Phillies to give Realmuto a few more days off during the dog days of summer.

Other notable catchers on the free agent market include veteran Russell Martin and Jonathan Lucroy.

JOE PANTORNO

THIS EAGLES CALAMITY IS ON DOUG

THE SPORTS PROFESSOR

GLEN MACNOW
@RealGlenMacnow

Twenty minutes after the worst loss of the Doug Pederson era, as numb fans clicked off their TVs and 20,000 loyalists who had traveled to Miami contemplated the long flight home, the head coach rubbed salt in their gaping wounds.

"That's a good football team," Pederson said of the now 3-9 Miami Dolphins. "Their record doesn't indicate anything about them. Those guys battled for 60 minutes."

Let's be honest. The Dolphins are a putrid football team. Their record is exactly who they are. And if they battled for 60 minutes while beating the Eagles, 37-31, it's because they were handed the golden ticket. The Birds choked on a 14-point third-quarter lead through penalties, dropped passes, overthrows, blown coverages and mistakes — both physical and mental — that would embarrass a Pop Warner team.

We can place blame for this calamity of a season almost everywhere (last week I targeted GM Howie Roseman). But after this stink bomb, the sharpest barbs must be aimed at the head coach and his bumbling assistants.

Let me count the ways:

1. PEDERSON'S PLAY-CALLING REEKS

Favoring the run may make me a Cro-Magnon among analytics freaks, but consider this: from the point they got up two TDs Sunday, Pederson called 20 pass plays and four runs. Overall, the Eagles had a 46-to-19 pass-run ratio against the NFL's second-worst rush defense.

This has been the trend. In the last three losses — all close — Pederson called for passes on 72 percent of the plays. It's not like the ground game hasn't worked, even without Jordan Howard. Miles Sanders averaged 4.6 yards per carry in those three losses; the team overall averaged 4.5.

2. THE DEFENSE COLLAPSED

Just when we thought the Eagles solved their defensive problems, old man Ryan Fitzpatrick unleashed five straight TD drives totaling 386 yards.

Throughout the second half, the Eagles rushed four men, sat in zone, and invited a cagy QB to carve them up. When they finally blitzed, Fitzpatrick read it like a first-grade primer. They never broke his rhythm.

Eagles head coach Doug Pederson was outmatched against the Dolphins, writes Glen Macnow. GETTY IMAGES

On the bright side, the defense didn't pose for any ceremonial pictures while down a touchdown or two this week. They just didn't show up.

This falls on the players and defensive coordinator Jim Schwartz, of course. But Pederson's the top man, so it really falls on him.

Take a hard look at the Eagles assistants — from the coordinators to the position coaches. Other than Duce Staley and offensive line coach Jeff Stoutland, is there anyone you want back next season?

3. KILLED AGAIN BY THE TRICK PLAY

Why the hell didn't Doug call a timeout when Miami shifted into that Arena League formation that allowed a punter to toss a TD pass to a kicker?

That's three weeks in a row they've been befuddled by a gadget play designed to suck in a dumb team. Each marked the turning point of the game. That speaks to discipline and smarts. Pederson's team displays neither.

Whatever mojo Doug had in the run to Super Bowl LII is long gone. His creative play calling and ability to adjust during games are just memories. His team has less talent, no doubt, but that doesn't account for long stretches of dumb, unmotivated football.

His franchise quarterback has regressed – as have most of the players around him. This is a flawed, broken franchise.

Pederson isn't going to get fired anytime soon, nor should he. The currency he built from the team's first Super Bowl title is far from spent.

But Sunday's loss to the rancid Dolphins could be one of those critical games you look back at when the end does come. From here, it sure feels like turning around this team is like turning around a rowboat that's gone over Niagara Falls.

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18 Eggs accompaniment
19 Package of paper
20 Retiree
22 At __; in disagreement
23 White meat
24 As cute __ button
26 Conflict
29 Supply money for
34 Jeer at
35 "Thanks, Pierre!"
36 Boston cream __
37 Right to bear __; 2nd Amendment subject
38 Craft class adhesive
39 Crumbly cheese
40 Actor & filmmaker Reiner
41 Judge's orders
42 Did an electrician's job
43 Depots
45 Instruments in the lute family
46 Shoot carefully
47 "You __ take it with you"
48 Took a __ at; attempted
51 About to happen
56 Bedspring
57 Cool dish
58 Robert De __ of "The Deer Hunter"
60 Up to the task
61 Uneven
62 Campbell of country music
63 Cozy home
64 Sutured
65 Female animal

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2 Harvest crops
3 Word after garage or white
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5 Robber
6 As comfortable __ old shoe
7 Diet successfully
8 Doorway
9 Hullabaloo
10 Regretted
11 Thrilled
12 American __; ND's state trees
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21 Mattress buyer's choice
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28 Cuban ballroom dance
29 Outperforms
30 Garfunkel's namesakes
31 La Scala production
32 About 1.75 pints
33 Guides others
35 Downtown street name
38 Gives one's word
39 Appropriate
41 Nintendo game console
42 Gale
44 Caplet
45 Made wood smooth
47 Discontinue
48 MRI or CT
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50 Is under the weather
52 Actress Winningham
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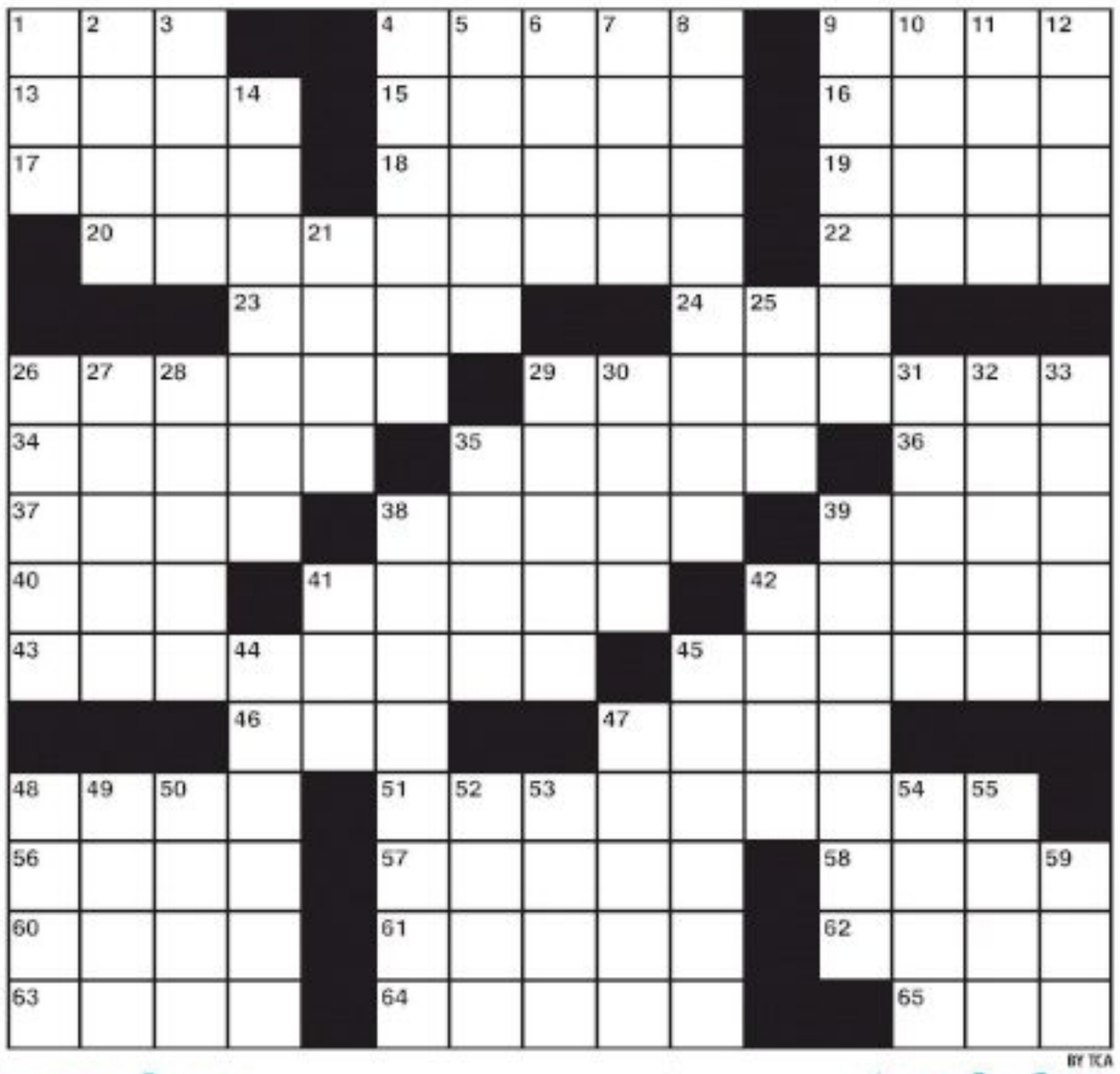
55 Got bigger
59 1/3 and 2/3



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N	N	O	Z	Z	F	E	S	T	S

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B	E	E	■	R	A	M	P	S	■	O	I	L	E	D
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